

Mission at the Turn of the Century/Millennium

C. RENÉ PADILLA

At the risk of oversimplification, it may be said that the greatest challenge that the Christian mission faces at the turn of the century/millennium is the phenomenon of globalisation. Even though this term is being widely used, one must not assume that there is a common understanding of its meaning. My first task in this article, therefore, will be an attempt to define this term. I will then deal with the significance of globalisation for religion today. Finally, I will discuss the question of mission in the light of globalisation.

The phenomenon of globalisation

A Diagnosis of Western Society

In his prophetic book, *Capitalism and Progress: A Diagnosis of Western Society*, published near the end of the 1970s, the Dutch economist Bob Goudzwaard described western society as a system of progress affected by three vulnerabilities:

1) *Ecological vulnerability*, made evident by the extensive literature dealing with issues such as the pollution of soil, water, and air, the extinction of numerous species of plants and animals, which may lead to the unavailability of raw materials and energy as well as of cultivated land to feed the growing world population.

2) *Economic vulnerability*, demonstrated by inflation and structural unemployment, which is the fruit of an economic system which has become unbalanced and top heavy, with an ethics that has been devoted to the service of economic expansion.

3) *Human vulnerability*, shown by the way in which people are pressured to accept *continual adjustment* to the external and obtrusive demands made on life – its style, tempo, and direction, even with regard to sports, sexual life, and leisure time. People are made to feel that they must be forever in search of excitement, new sensations and thrills.

According to Goudzwaard, the society marked by these vulnerabilities is a tunnel society. It is a society,

supposedly, in which

everything – people, institutions, norms, behaviour – contributes to the smooth advance toward the light at the end of the tunnel. But the end of the tunnel never appears to be within reach; the light shines forever in the future. Nevertheless, it keeps everything and everyone in the tunnel on the move (p. 183). . . toward continued economic, technological, and scientific development which we equate with social liberty and cultural advance (p. 185).

This is a society, says Goudzwaard, in which faith in progress plays a fundamental role, but in which, at the same time, our progress has become our problem. The tunnel has become our trap (p.185).

Since the publication of *Capitalism and Progress*, Goudzwaard has returned to the analysis of the problems of western society, with particular emphasis on those related to economy and ecology. In *Beyond Poverty and Affluence: Toward an Economy of Care*, co-authored with Harry de Lange, the former Professor of the Free University of Amsterdam outlines six paradoxes that show that the economic problems which affect the industrialized nations have become structural:

1) *The Scarcity Paradox*: Our society, which is a society of unprecedented wealth, experiences unprecedented scarcity (p. 2);

2) *The Poverty Paradox*: Poverty is rising sharply in the midst of wealthy societies (p. 3).

3) *The Care Paradox*: In the midst of more wealth, we have fewer opportunities to practise care than before (p.4).

4) *The Labour Paradox*: Our society's need for more labour is becoming critical even as unemployment rises (p.4).

5) *The Health Paradox*: Even though our level of health care has increased, our level of disease is rising (p.5).

6) *The Time Paradox*: Despite substantially more

wealth, we have less and less time in our lives (p.5).

For Goudzwaard and de Lange, these are new, bewildering, and seemingly inexplicable developments unfolding in today's economy (p. 2).

One does not have to be an economist to recognize the essential validity of this diagnosis of western society. Each of these six paradoxes is at the very heart of the industrialized countries and there is plenty of accessible evidence to show its consequences. Already in the middle of the 1970s, Alvin Toffler saw the signs of what he called the depression of the future, involving the breakdown of the industrial society and the birth of a new civilization (1975). Today's paradoxes show that the society that he predicted has arrived—a wholly new and dramatically different social order: a super-industrial civilization that will be technological, but no longer industrial (p. 3). Conventional economists are totally unable to explain, even less to cope with, today's schizophrenic economy that has lost touch with reality (p. 1). As Toffler put it, 'Nothing in the history of traditional industrial societies has prepared them (or us) for today's high speed world of instant communication, Eurodollars, petrodollars, multinational corporations, and ganglia-like international banking consortia' (p. 5).

No analysis of western society, however, is complete if it does not take into account the role that material wealth plays in the free-market economy in the world today. Built on the assumption that economics is a positive, neutral, value-free science dealing with questions of production, consumption, income, and money in the market, the modern economic system is almost totally oriented to the accumulation of wealth rather than to the satisfaction of basic human needs. According to Goudzwaard and de Lange, this system has as a result neglected at least four fronts: economic needs, nature and the environment, economic accountability, and labour. 'Neoclassical economics was not designed to help these problems' (p. 59). Wealth for the sake of wealth is the motto. The profit motive takes precedence over the subsistence motive; labour and raw materials are mere commodities.

Under the rule of Mammon, western society is deeply affected by ecological, economic, and human vulnerability. With all its problems, however, this society is at the very centre of what Toffler has called 'the global casino' (p. 1), one of whose fundamental characteristics is 'the inability of national regulatory mechanisms to deal with transnational economic realities' (Toffler 1975 p. 5).

The Global System

The quotation from Toffler in the last paragraph points to one of the marks of the present-day economic system: 'transnational economic realities' which transcend 'national regulatory mechanisms'. In Latin American countries we are painfully aware that, whether we like it or not, we are part of a world economic system over

which our national governments, regardless of their intentions or their ideology, have very little influence or none at all. To speak of globalisation is basically to speak of 'transnational economic realities' that decisively condition human life all over the world on both an individual and a community basis. What has been globalised is, in fact, the so-called Neo-liberal capitalist system with the United States as its centre. The internationalisation of production, trading, and monetary capital has transformed the planet into a world market oriented toward the accumulation of capital for the benefit of a small and powerful minority who are able to determine national government policies on a global scale. 'With the transnational finance markets as the agents of the owners of money assets, the capitalist market economy has made significant progress towards its goal of running world society as an appendage to self-regulating markets' (Duchrow 1995 p. 71).

If anything is clear today, it is that the solution that politicians, under the control of, or in connivance with, the wealthy minority, are trying to implement in the face of the paradoxes posed by the present global economic system is simply not working. At the root of that solution is the assumption, oftentimes made by economists and government officials, that economic problems are to be solved by letting the market of goods and service – 'the invisible hand' – operate in conformity with the theory of competition. In practice, in a society characterized by a stark imbalance of power, the unavoidable result of competition is that the strong become stronger and the weak become weaker. In economic terms, the rich become richer, and the poor become poorer.

That this is, in fact, what is happening does not need to be demonstrated here. There is an overwhelming quantity of published evidence to show the devastating effects that 'savage capitalism' is having on the poor sectors of the population not only in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but also in the wealthy countries; and not only on people, but also on the environment. Goudzwaard and de Lange give a picture of the situation in terms of three 'economic impasses' (pp. 6-36):

1) *Poverty*, involving rising production and falling income, rising numbers of poor people, widening income gaps, increasing foreign debt, massive subsidization of the North by the South since 1982, and falling expectations.

2) *The Environment*, involving the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, acid rain, loss in biological diversity, toxic chemical waste, deterioration of agriculture, destruction of human health, deforestation, and the issue of energy supply.

3) *The Employment System*, involving increased unemployment and deterioration of the quality of work.

The problem is compounded by what Goudzwaard and de Lange have called 'the changing nature of international conflict' (p. 36), which refers to the fact that, as the Gulf War showed, 'now it is primarily the afflu-

ent nations, not the poor nations, who find themselves compelled to acquire, with whatever degree of violence is required, guaranteed access to the world's oil fields' (pp. 36-37).

The most dramatic effect of the global market economy has been the emergence of a new division of society that throws into relief the polarization between rich and poor and becomes most visible in the Two-thirds World. At the top of the social ladder are the elect few who benefit from the system – the owners of financial assets, the market consumers *par excellence*. Toffler refers to them in the following terms:

Multinational corporate executives, bankers, and money people are not sinister characters out of some *Pravda* cartoon. They are not all spies and counter-revolutionary saboteurs as the T&T role in Chile suggests. They are simply investors, managers, and planners taking advantage of the world's biggest loophole [the lack of adequate regulations for global corporations] – and upsetting the world economy in the process (p. 78).

At the bottom of the social scale are the excluded many, the increasing mass of people whose role with regard to the market is limited to that of spectators. They are excluded from the market, although not from society, because they are regarded as totally redundant in relation to the international financial transactions that take place at the top of the economic system. They are the first to suffer the consequences of drastic budgetary reductions in education, health, housing, social security, retirement programmes, etc., imposed on the peripheral countries by the economic centres. Unable to cover their basic needs, they pay the so-called 'social cost' of macro-economic development. They are the victims that the system sets aside for the human sacrifice required by the 'idolatry of the market'! (Assmann and Hinkelammert 1989).

The awful injustice of this social apartheid is an open denial of human dignity and a blatant insult to the Maker, who 'from one ancestor made all nations to inhabit the whole earth'. According to a recent report of the Development Program of the United Nations (quoted by Casaldáliga 1999 p. 32), one billion two hundred million people have to live on one dollar a day per person or less. Paradoxically enough, 30 billion dollars a year would suffice to cover their basic needs, while the Japanese spend 35 billion dollars a year in recreational games, the Europeans spend 50 billion dollars a year on cigarettes and 105 billion dollars a year on alcoholic beverages, and the world spends 400 billion dollars a year on drugs, 780 billion dollars a year on weapons, and 435 billion dollars on advertising. As Charles C. West has rightly argued, now that the Soviet Union is 'no longer a power and no longer a model' (2000 p.2), the demon of Marxist Communism – 'a challenging demon in our sinful world' – has been driven out, but the 'global forces of business, technology,

and finance' (p. 7) are the demons that hover at our doorstep, and they remain unchallenged!

A few years ago it was often said that, by selling their raw materials to the wealthy, the poor countries were mortgaging their future. Under the present economic system their predicament has worsened to the point that there is no exaggeration in saying that no longer do the poor have a future to mortgage, for their future has been sold to the wealthy together with their present.

Globalisation and Religion

A Religious Supermarket

Until quite recently it was generally assumed that the process of secularisation was closely related to the progress of civilization toward greater human freedom from pre-scientific concepts, as a result of a better understanding of reality. As an aspect of modernity, secularisation was supposed to be an inevitable process that would bring about, as a consequence, the disappearance of religion.

According to Verónica Roldán (1999:276), secularisation became an important topic of discussion in the mid-sixties, when Harvey Cox published *The Secular City* (1965), in which, based on current sociological studies, he claimed that interest in religion was bound to disappear progressively from the modern world. Cox believed that the socially relevant aspects of religion would be disregarded or superseded, and popular religiosity, including pilgrimages, healings, miracles, and interest in supernatural phenomena, would simply decline. Three decades later, however, Cox published a book under the title, *Fire from Heaven. The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twentieth Century* (1995), in which he openly admitted that his predictions regarding the future of religion had been mistaken.

At least in the case of Latin America, there is plenty of evidence to demonstrate that we are today in the midst of a great *religious revival* which places a question mark on any understanding of secularisation as implying the disappearance of religion. The order of the day is not irreligiosity but religious pluralism. The time is past when it was taken for granted that Roman Catholicism could remain unchallenged as *the* religion of the large majority of people and, consequently, as the only one entitled to government support. Under the impact of technology, and especially of the mass media, the religious field is now opened to all kinds of alternatives to such an extent that Latin America has become a supermarket of religious options. As Peter Berger (1973) has pointed out, religious pluralism creates a 'market situation' in which 'the religious tradition, which previously could be authoritatively imposed, now has to be *marketed*' (p.142). The rise of Afro-Brazilian Umbanda, Spiritism, the New Era, Eastern cults, and Pre-Hispanic Indian religions witnesses to a search for

transcendence at a time when the large majority of people feel that in the global village society is falling apart, family life is under threat, no job is secure, and the future is terribly uncertain.

The present religious revival may also be interpreted in the light of post-modernity. The post-modern paradigm, which is being globalised together with the Neo-liberal economic system, is an ambiguous phenomenon. On the one hand, it is a reaction to modernity, with its emphasis on the pre-eminence of reason, accurate knowledge, and objective truth – the very basis of the scientific method that has made modern technology possible. As modernity gives way to post-modernity (cf. Bosch 1991 pp. 349-362), confidence in reason as the starting point for valid knowledge is replaced by interest in myths, symbols, rites, metaphors, mysteries, the ineffable. The analytical epistemological method as the means to the objective knowledge of reality is replaced by a holistic or symbiotic approach which eliminates the subject-object scheme. Linear thinking, which pretends to explain everything on the basis of the law of cause and effect, is replaced by the recognition of contingency and unpredictability. Faith in progress is replaced by the affirmation of the need to empower the weak. The notion that scientific knowledge is always factual, neutral, and value-free is replaced by suspicion towards any and every claim to objectivity. Optimism based on the idea that all problems have a solution is replaced by the recognition that imponderable factors are part and parcel of human history. The concept of individual autonomy is replaced by an emphasis on interdependence. All of these elements may be regarded as providing a positive framework for a more holistic approach to mission.

On the other hand, post-modernity poses a new challenge to Christianity on different levels. No longer can it be assumed that a 'return to reason' that ignores human existential needs can be at the centre of Christian apologetics. Nor can appeals to logical reasoning, with total disregard of feelings, be expected to result in a positive response to the gospel. Individual freedom, the disregard for objective truth and ethical values, the exacerbation of the emotions, and the search for self-realization and pleasure are becoming the trade mark of a growing number of people in the 'tunnel society' whose ecological, economic, and human vulnerabilities are being increasingly globalised.

The Post-modern Church

Several observers of the contemporary religious situation in Latin America have pointed to the link between the so-called mass-media culture of post-modernity and the new religious movements, including a good number of mega-churches. Quite clearly, these mass media increasingly determine religious conduct. At the same time, religious organizations are increasingly using the resources that technology has placed within their reach.

The striking adoption of mass media, especially on the part of Neo-Pentecostal churches, which are the churches that grow at the fastest rate, is part and parcel of a combination of ways in which these churches, for the sake of (numerical) growth, have adjusted themselves to the *Zeitgeist* of the media, including the business approach, the overemphasis on management and marketing techniques, the offer of material prosperity, and the dependence on entertainment.

At the International Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974, I took to task a type of 'culture Christianity' that, in a market of free consumers of religion, had resorted to reducing its message to a minimum in order to make more people want to become Christian (Padilla 1975). 'The gospel thus becomes', I claimed, 'a type of merchandise, the acquisition of which guarantees to the consumer the highest values – success in life and personal happiness now and forever. The act of accepting Christ is the means to reach the ideal of the good life, at no cost' (p. 126). Over a quarter of a century later, massive accommodation to contemporary culture continues to be the basis for the strategy for (numerical) church growth. Because of the advances that have been made since then in the process of economic and cultural globalisation, however, post-modernity has become the determining factor in the way culture Christianity is seeking to ensure numerical success in the face of all the competing religious alternatives.

In another article (1999) I have outlined the ways in which post-modernity is affecting a growing number of neo-charismatic churches in Latin America with regard to worship (cf. Ocaña 2000), Christian experience, leadership, and the presence of the church in society. Obviously, we are in the midst of a 'paradigm shift' which is radically transforming the life and mission of the church. The changes that are taking place are well exemplified by Leonildo Silveira Campos (1999) in his careful study of the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, IURD), whose amazing expansion not only in Brazil, where it started, but also in other countries has attracted the attention of many scholars. The title of Campos' study reflects the content of the book but also the nature of the church which is its subject matter: *Temple, Theatre, and Market: Organization and Marketing of a Neopentecostal Enterprise*. Campos has demonstrated that the IURD has certainly found the key to numerical growth in the context of the present global system. That key consists in turning the worship services into theatrical shows; in converting the church building into a place that radiates supernatural energy and provides protection and material prosperity through financial sacrifice; in adapting religion to the requirements of the marketing of 'sacred goods' in a market where there are many other religious options; in making professional use of the mass media for selling 'spiritual merchandise' rather than 'material goods'; in mastering a rhetorical discourse that communicates

to people a sense of unity in a fragmented world.

The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God is one of the most striking post-modern religious phenomena and is typical of the kind of evangelical popular religiosity which is rapidly spreading all over Latin America. A similar development, however, is taking place within Roman Catholicism in Brazil. The Father Marcelo Rossi phenomenon in Sao Paulo is a good example. His masses that are a combination of ancient rites, contemporary rock, lively show, and mass media have conquered Brazil! As Comblin has put it,

Now the person experiences God in his heart, in his feelings, in his religious emotions. The person feels the presence and the love of God in a vivid way. This experience becomes more intense because of the interaction with other experiences. If the same kind of experience is lived by thousands and even hundreds of thousands of people, it is transformed into fullness of joy – they cry, scream, and move in a sort of spiritual orgasm (2000 p. 154, my translation).

Father Marcelo's Red Viva de TV (Living TV Network) has become popular even among conservative clergymen because it represents, says Comblin, 'the perfect inculturation into urban [post-modern] culture'. It has adopted the fundamental expression of that culture – the show. But, he adds, 'the show is not a mere pageant, but participation in the movement of life' through which 'lonely persons from the urban civilization feel they are part of a great community, experience the warmth of thousands of human beings, all of whom are brothers and sisters' (p. 155).

The criticisms that Comblin levels against Father Marcelo's approach are also applicable to the whole of post-modern popular religiosity, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. In the first place, this religiosity is deeply conservative. It reinforces clericalism and triumphalism: 'It reconstitutes the sacred figure of the priest [or the pastor] with new expressions' and recovers traditional ritualistic elements which were beginning to disappear. In the second place, it fails to question the dominating system: 'No change either in the Church or in society. Popular religion is well taken care of in clerical hands, and it will not break the rules.' In the third place, it gives priority to 'the natural experience of God, the renewal of religious feelings, the rediscovery of both the supernatural prestige of the priest and the social prestige of the Church' (p. 156). The gospel, however, is something else.

Mission and Globalisation

The Starting Point

Perhaps the biggest temptation that churches have to face in today's religious market, where one can find food for every palate, is to design their missionary strategy and their programmes not according to biblical

principles but according to the dictates of pragmatism. The controlling question is, how can we attract the largest number of people and convince them to become Christian? How can we grow our church?

Over a quarter of a century ago, at the Lausanne Congress, I qualified as *worldliness* the attempt to win converts by reducing the demands of the gospel so as 'to produce the greatest number of Christians at the least possible cost in the least possible time' (1975 p. 126). The same message continues to be urgently needed today. At the risk of sounding too critical, it must be said that the post-modern church has found the formula to obtain phenomenal growth, but at the very high cost of replacing historical Christianity with a cheap version of the gospel.

A serious misunderstanding of both the mission and the message of the church lies at the root of the problem present in the type of church growth that, by virtue of the globalisation of the Neo-liberal economic system as well as of post-modern culture, has become fashionable in Latin America and other parts of the world in the last few decades. When numerical growth is given prominence in the strategy for the church's mission, the door is opened for all kinds of distortions not only in the mission but also in the very life and in the message of the church. As Christian A. Schwarz (1996) has argued, there are things that we can do and things that we cannot do with regard to church growth, and focusing simply on 'numerical church growth is precisely what we cannot do'. Consequently, he adds, 'our work should concentrate on organizing the institutional pole of the church in a way which is consistent with divine principles, so that the organic pole can grow in the healthiest possible way and without unnecessary hindrances' (p. 99, my translation).

According to Schwarz, as in the realm of creation God has given to plants the 'life principle' or 'biotic potential' which allows them to grow and to produce fruit in a natural way, provided that the necessary conditions – a good seed, a good soil, water, and light – are present, so also in the realm of redemption God has given the churches the 'life or biotic principle' to enable them to grow and to multiply in a natural way, provided that certain conditions are fulfilled. On the basis of extensive research involving one thousand growing churches in thirty-two countries around the world, he suggests that church growth depends on eight essential qualitative characteristics: empowering leadership, ministry according to gifts, contagious spirituality, functional structures, inspiring worship, holistic cell groups, evangelism according to need, and loving relationships.

The value of Schwarz's approach resides in that in no way does he deny the importance of numerical church growth, nor does he place it in opposition to qualitative growth. Rather, he emphasizes the importance of doing what we *can do* and letting God do what God alone *will do* to build up the church. I would suggest that this is the starting point for mission at the turn of the century.

To Be, To Do, and To Say

The subtitle of Schwarz's work is, 'A practical guide to natural church growth', and that is what his book is. His practical approach, however, has a solid theological foundation. For a more detailed exposition of the kind of theology that could be used to support natural church growth, which is the type of growth most urgently needed in the church today, one can hardly find anything better than *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message, and Messengers* (1989), by Darrell L. Guder.

For this author, the framework for a proper understanding of the church's mission is God's purpose for the whole of creation. God's 'election' of a people is related to his universal purpose. God's blessing, therefore, is inseparable from mission. The church is the agency through which the message of God's purpose and his reconciling action through Jesus Christ is made known to the world. The central act of salvation history, as well as the main content of the Christian message is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As 'the community of witness', the church is called to be the witness, to do the witness, and to say the witness. By taking these three dimensions into account – being, doing, and saying – the church's mission is defined 'incarnationally'.

Being a witness. According to Guder, in order to be a witness the church must become a witness; the indicatives of the faith must be translated into obedience to the imperatives. The presupposition for this step is the church as the 'equipping community' that enables its members to see themselves as Christ's witnesses to the world. 'God allows his Good News to continue to become flesh in the corporate and individual reality of the church in order to make his love and grace known to the entire creation, which Christ died to save' (p. 109).

If the gospel of reconciliation through Jesus Christ is to be incarnated in the Christian community, there is no way to avoid the question posed by the division of society, on both a local and a global level, along social, cultural, economic, racial, political, or class lines. The church is called to be, both locally and globally, the community of reconciliation fully committed to unity and mutual acceptance in the midst of diversity, fragmentation, discrimination, exclusion, and social apartheid. Consequently, the first prerequisite for mission at the turn of the century is the formation of churches that embody the gospel of reconciliation.

The local church whose constituency is a visible illustration of God's reconciling purpose in Jesus Christ is in a unique position to take the initiative in promoting the kind of open dialogue which is needed in order to enable civil society to find ways to cooperate towards the solution of social and ecological problems. As Toffler has pointed out, much of the planning which is done today in the hope of solving these problems is long-range, obsessed with economics, and elitist, far

removed from the ordinary citizen. Therefore, it lacks the 'vital negative feedback [which] can only come from an educated, informed, and involved public' (1975 p. 100). If society is to move away from that kind of planning, however, the decision-making process has to be democratized, 'not merely because that is good, just, or altruistic, but because it is necessary [since] without broad-scale citizen involvement, even the most conscientious and expertly drawn plans are likely to blow up in our faces'. For the necessary change, 'new ways will have to be found to open the entire process, even at the highest levels, to popular input, to feedback from below' (p. 101). No institution in society is more fit than the heterogeneous church that sees the whole of creation under the sovereignty of God and has a strong sense of unity in Christ across all kinds of barriers, to foster such a 'feedback from below' for the common good.

Doing the witness. The gospel, says Guder, is not 'a program of morality or education, or a platform for political and social reform' (p. 114), but we are 'saved to serve' (p. 117), thus overcoming 'the heretical division of the church's task into mission and benefit' (p. 129). From this perspective, there is no place in the life and mission of the church today for the sharp division between the personal gospel and the social gospel, between evangelism and social responsibility, between faith and works. In a world deeply affected by poverty, exploitation, institutional violence, and injustice, the church is called to embody God's love and justice. West's poignant question, addressed to fellow-Christians in the United States but equally relevant to anyone in a position of privilege anywhere in the world, is unavoidable:

Will we keep our eye on the real issue: the use of our great economic and technological resources, or our vast financial system, to promote the welfare of all the people, not the profit of a few, to bring the poor and the dispossessed into full community with the rest of us – in short, to realize justice in the world? (2000 p. 6).

For the community of 'those who hunger and thirst for justice', every effort 'to realize justice in the world' falls under the category of 'doing the witness' to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of the God who 'loves justice' (Ps 99:4).

Saying the witness. All too often in evangelical circles the saying of the witness has been isolated from the totality of the witness. In reaction, many Christians fail to see the crucial importance of sharing the Good News orally. Guder calls for 'the saying of the gospel in full harmony with the being and the doing of the witness' (p. 139), and for not doing that only from the pulpit but 'in such a way that the gospel surfaces out of the interaction of daily life' (p. 147).

Being the witness, doing the witness, and saying the witness are the essential ingredients of holistic mission.¹

And this should be the order of the day for the church of Jesus Christ in the global village at the turn of the new century and millennium.

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Dr Rene Padilla is director of the Kairos Institute, Buenos Aires and Tearfund's International President.